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Some Details of the Journal of Jacob Roggeveen

Herbert von Saher,
Bloemendaal, the Netherlands

Every reader of *RNJ* probably knows that Jacob Roggeveen discovered Easter Island on Easter Day in April 1722, but few readers know more from the journal of Roggeveen. The editors of *RNJ* have asked me to write about some of the journal's details that may be of interest to the student of Rapa Nui. I will give attention to three aspects of the journey: 1) Why it was an extraordinary journey; 2) What happened during the days that Roggeveen's fleet was near Easter Island; and 3) How the whole expedition ended in disaster.

The expedition was extraordinary in two ways. In November of 1520, Magellan, a Portuguese in Spanish service, first entered the Pacific through the strait that still bears his name. Between that moment and roughly 1650, most of the oceans of the world were visited and mapped. After 1650, few great discovery-trips were made. Why did Roggeveen leave 71 years later in 1721? It was Jacob Roggeveen's father, Arend Roggeveen (a wine merchant with a hobby for geography and astronomy) who, in 1671, together with other merchants from Zeeland, made a plan to navigate the Pacific and, more specifically, to discover "Southland." Southland was supposed to be a continent lying east of New Zealand, perhaps of the size of Australia and in one of the few areas of the Pacific not yet mapped. In 1675 this plan was presented to the States General of the Netherlands along with a request for a Charter. In 1676 this Charter was granted, but Arend Roggeveen and his friends were unable to finance the expedition and it did not take place. Arend Roggeveen died in 1679.

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The Poike Ditch in Retrospect

By Carlyle S. Smith, Ph.D.

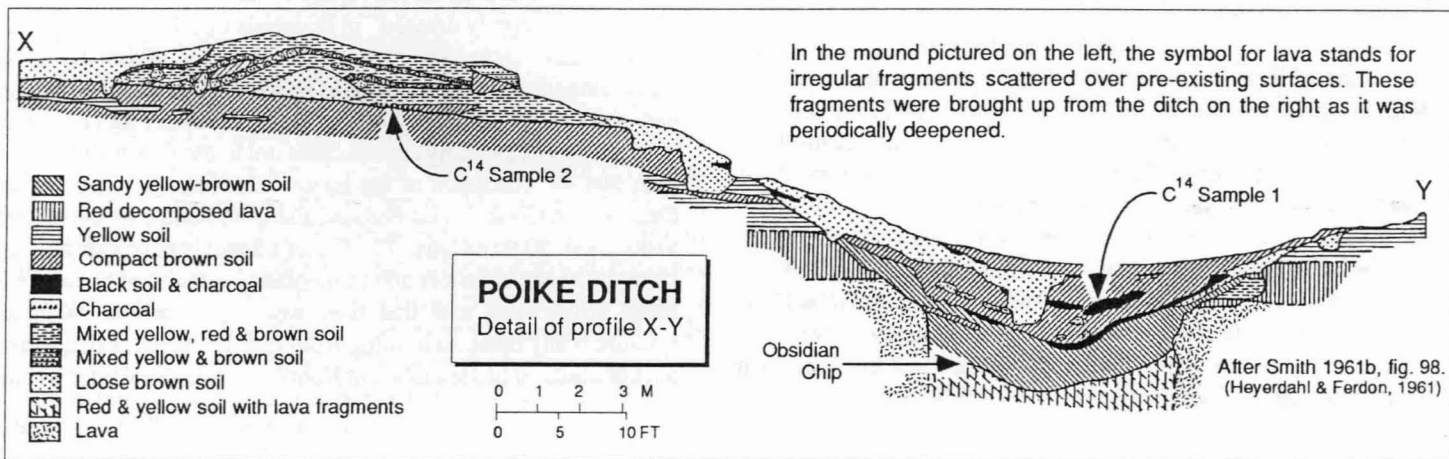
The nature, origin and function of the Poike Ditch has often received at least passing reference in the now voluminous published comments on Easter Island. First, I do not intend to get into the controversy over the legend, or myth, assigning it a role in a conflict between two groups of people known as the Hanau Eepe and the Hanau Momoko. My primary concern is whether or not the hand of man was involved in its form and function.

Routledge (1919:281, footnote) concludes that the ditch was the result of geological faulting, but attributes the mounds on the eastern edge to possible use as fortifications. The geologist Chubb (1933:33) must have viewed the entire feature from afar in 1925 because he terms it a "gully" and the reader is forced to assume that it is located at the base of an eroded cliff instead of at the top. Métraux (1940:72) and Lavachery (1933:346-347) pass it off as a natural feature in the terrain. This is typical of Métraux who also displayed his myopic view of any alteration of terrain by man in his inability to see terraces on the hill known as Maunga Auhepa at Anakena (Métraux 1940:96; Smith 1961:277).

In 1955, as a member of the Norwegian Archaeological Expedition, I conferred with my colleagues Ferdon, Mulloy, and Skjølsvold concerning mutual agreements on the excavation of sites based on our peculiar backgrounds and interests. They agreed that I should investigate Poike Ditch because I had an academic background in geology and had previously excavated eight "ditch and bank" features at archaeological sites in Coastal New York and the Great Plains of North America.

To introduce the subject, let me quote from my published report on my work at the ditch (Smith 1961b:385): "An undulating plain thickly strewn with masses of black lava and smaller fragments

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Roggeveen continued...

His son, Jacob, was born in 1659. He attended the Latin School and later went to the Academy of Saumur in France (the Protestant University). He got a doctor's degree in law. Applying for a job with the East India Company (V.O.C.), he was accepted and in 1706 he voyaged to Java as a passenger. In Batavia he became Council of Justice. He married there but his wife died before his return in 1715. It was after his return that his father's plan to discover Southland was revived by him. He applied to the West Indies Company (W.I.C.) which had the charter for the Pacific; they put three ships at his disposal for the discovery voyage. He left on 16 June 1721, 46 years after his father's first request was presented.

From the foregoing, it can be concluded that this voyage was a delayed exercise and that Jacob Roggeveen was quite different from the buccaneering type of early explorer for he was not only an intellectual, but when he left he was 62 years old, an age at which most early explorers were long dead or at least retired and sitting on their pieces of eight.

For the end of the story it should also be known that the States General of the Netherlands had chartered two companies to trade overseas and represent them: the "Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie" (V.O.C.) for the Eastern Hemisphere and the "West-Indische Compagnie" (W.I.C.) for the Western Hemisphere. The borderline of their territories at the other side of the world was the island of New Guinea. The V.O.C. was the first limited liability company on the basis of shares in the world; it was for two centuries the biggest company in the world and also the first multinational with establishments in South Africa, Mauritius, Sri Lanka, India, Burma, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, the Philippines, China and Japan. It was tremendously powerful and it showed. The W.I.C. was never very successful and was more of an "underdog."

Easter Island

Roggeveen was instructed by the W.I.C. to proceed with due speed to the south Pacific, following more or less the course of two earlier Dutch explorers, Willem Cornelisz Schouten and Jacob Le Maire, and to discover Southland. On his way back he was—under no circumstance—to enter English ports or to inform anyone that he carried a cargo from Southland.

Roggeveen was commander over three ships: the *Arend* ("eagle"), Captain Jan Koster, with 110 men and 32 cannon; the *Thienhoven*, Captain Cornelis Bouman, with 80 men and 24 cannon; and the *Africaansche Galeij*, Captain Roelof Rosendael, with 33 men and 14 cannon.

Roggeveen was quite different from the other early explorers: no unilateral decisions for him. For every important decision he met with his three captains in the "ship's council," and they pondered the alternatives together and then a decision was taken. These decisions were put down in written notes that all four signed, and these form an important part of the journal.

5 April 1722 • A tortoise was seen, then floating vegetation, and then birds. In the late afternoon the *Africaansche Galeij* sighted land. It was decided to stop and await the next day. As this was Easter Day, Roggeveen decided to name the island Easter Island. There was great joy on the ships as the crews hoped that this island was along the coast of Southland.

6 April 1722 • The fleet cruised along the lee side of the island; as an easterly wind was reported, this must have been along the west coast. They saw smoke and concluded that it must be inhabited. A ship's council was held in which it was decided to go ashore in order to obtain fresh vegetables and fruit, "showing all friendliness to the inhabitants."

7 April 1722 • The weather turned bad with thunder, lightning, and heavy showers; the landing was postponed. But an Easter Islander came in a canoe to the *Thienhoven* and Captain Bouman brought this man to the *Arend*. Roggeveen, who sometimes shows a wonderful irony, describes this man as follows: "an Easter Islander, who was entirely naked, without the slightest cover in front of what modesty prevents to indicate more clearly." This man was greatly surprised to see this big ship with its high masts; he wanted to touch everything. He got the fright of his life when they held a mirror in front of him. He returned quite satisfied with sissors, the mirror and other small presents that he received.

The fleet came nearer to the coast and Roggeveen doubted that this island could be the "sandy, low island" that William Dampier had described in his earlier journal at about this position. What looked from a distance as sand appeared to be dried grass, hay or burnt growth giving an uncommonly meager impression. This means that already in 1722 Easter Island looked as it does today.

8 April 1722 • After breakfast, two sloops rowed to the coast. They had instructions not to go on land if the number of "Indians" was too large. This requires an explanation, also in relation to the fact that some books on Easter Island suggest that the trigger-happy Dutch fired at random at the population after some hats were stolen, starting that awful sequence of visitors that only brought murder and harm to Rapa Nui. On board their ships with the tremendous firepower of their cannons, the sailors were practically invulnerable to attack even by thousands of natives. But once they went on land, the situation became quite different: if hand to hand fighting broke out, a small band of sailors would not be able to maintain themselves against a very superior number of inhabitants. The possession of muskets, etc., does not help them anymore. This was always the great fear of the sailors who already had lost too many of their companions from scurvy and could not face more loss of life from fighting. A certain minimum is needed to man a ship and if this minimum is no longer there, then no one can return. The sailors always moved in closed squares so they should not become dispersed and thus more vulnerable.

The two returning sloops reported that on land the inhabitants were "very properly dressed" in materials of different colours and that they gave signs to come on land, which the sailors did not do. Some inhabitants were reported to be wearing silver plates on their ears and mother-of-pearl shells around their necks for adornment.

9 April 1722 • Many canoes came out to the Dutch ships. It was then that the obsession of the Easter Islanders with hats became clear, which Cook and La Perouse also commented on during their visits about 50 years later. The Easter Islanders stole hats and caps from the heads of sailors and immediately jumped overboard with them. Roggeveen saw that they were all excellent swimmers because many came swimming from land to the ships that were at anchor a quarter of a sea mile out from the coast. One Easter Islander

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climbed from his canoe through the porthole of the *Africaansche Galey* and escaped with a tablecloth. One gets the impression that the sailors saw this with some amusement and they certainly did not fire at these "souvenir hunters." (That was done 50 years later by a sailor of Captain Cook's fleet, who fired at an islander after having been robbed of his hat.) Captain Bouman could not understand what use they had for worn brooms, pieces of firewood and other trash.

10 April 1722 • Finally three sloops went to the coast with 134 armed men; 20 men stayed to protect the sloops. Remember that Roggeveen had left Holland with 223 men; without counting loss of life in the meantime, 134 men constituted 60% of their total strength. Climbing over the cliffs on the shore, the men began marching inland when suddenly some shots were heard at the back of the group. The commanders in front had not given orders for this and did not understand what had happened. Ten to twelve Easter Islanders were dead and more wounded. It appeared that one of the Islanders had tried to steal the gun of one of the sailors, while another tried to tear off a shirt and this started the skirmish in the rear. After recovering from the shock, the headman of the Islanders started negotiating with the Dutch and he gave orders to collect chickens, sweet potatoes, sugar cane and bananas. These orders were followed with due respect and curtesy. The Dutch paid "richly" in cloth that very much satisfied the Islanders.

Roggeveen describes the Easter Island clothing as "rags": a sort of thick reed, but he adds: "clean and hygienic." Apparently he did not know of the beaten tree-bark used in place of textiles. It was discovered that the "silver plates" worn on ears were, at short distance, not silver at all but the roots of a plant "like one would say in Holland of white coloured carrots" worn through the earlobes. These "carrots" are up to two inches in diameter causing the earlobes to extend. When the Islanders had to do jobs where the long earlobes were a nuisance, they hung the opening over the top edge of the ear, which made the Dutch laugh. This detailed description makes it clear that in 1722 there were many "long ears" on the island and either the war with the "short ears" (with only one long ear survivor) had not taken place or it never happened at all. Apart from the laughter about the ears, the visitors admired the Islanders' proportioned muscular bodies, the light colour of the skin (sometimes painted dark blue by members of the higher classes), their beautiful snow white teeth that were so strong they could crack nuts "as hard as peachstones" with them, and their long black hair rolled into a plait on top of the head, "just like the Chinese in Batavia." As regards their religion, Roggeveen notes that there was little time to study this, but he did see that the Islanders made fires in front of very high statues and they crouched on their heels, bringing their flat hands together and moving them up and down. Roggeveen was first greatly surprised that a people devoid of heavy wood to make tools from and thick rope could transport these heavy statues. Later this surprise diminished when they found out (and here they are quite wrong) that the statues were made of "clay or fat earth into which small stones had been pushed." They could not understand at all how the Islanders could cook without pottery, pans or barrels until they found out that it was done in holes in the ground with big stones that were preheated in fire. He gives a description of the houses with their wooden frames and low entrances and he is surprised by the ample (four feet wide) "terraces" around the houses made of big stones, flat and polished, and neatly put together (this makes one

think of the "boulevards" of southern Nias, off the west coast of Sumatra).

Not much admiration was left for their canoes, however, which were narrow planks sewn together. As they lacked pitch to fill the seams, these canoes were very leaky so that the occupant had to spend half his time bailing. This clearly shows that in 1722, the scarcity of wood on the Island was already serious.

Roggeveen makes a few remarks on the feathers in the head-dresses of the Islanders, for it strikes him that he has seen so few birds on the island. He also commented on the body painting "in regular proportions so that one side of the body is in conformity with the other."

The "King" of the Island had invited the group to visit the other side of the island where agriculture was practised and the fruit trees grew. But a strong northerly wind started, making their anchorage site on the northwest coast dangerous. Very few men were left on the ships, so it was decided not to prolong the stay on land. So they returned before the wind became too strong.

11 April 1722 • Strong winds and high seas cause the Thienhoven to break its anchor rope.

12 April 1722 • Strong winds continue and another anchor rope snaps and now the ships are in real danger of being driven onto the rocky coast. Roggeveen decides that this anchorage is too dangerous so the fleet hoists sail and moves off. They do some observation around Easter Island's shorelines and then move off to the west.

This ends a week near Easter Island and only one day ashore. Roggeveen took his order to proceed to Southland "as quickly as possible" quite literally; he was not interested in anthropological research and many after him would also find that the island's rocky coast with its strong changeable winds an unsafe place to lie at anchor.

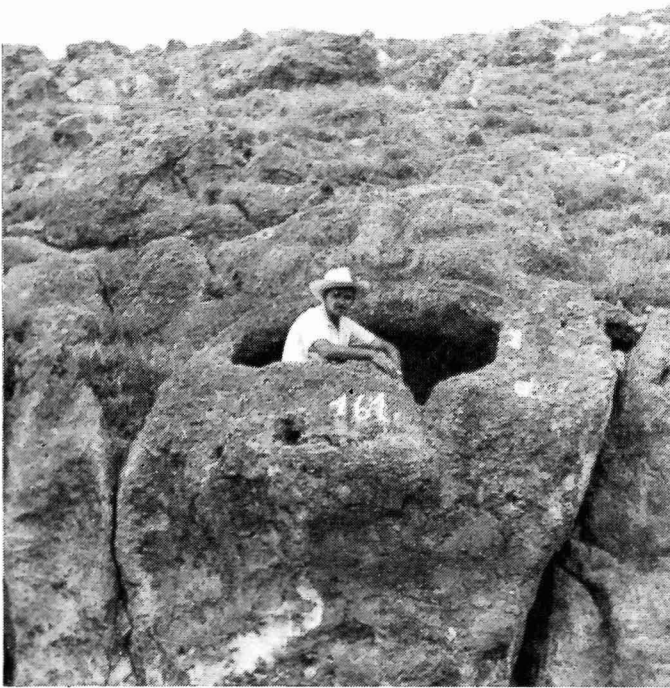
Captain Bouman questioned the man who was responsible for the shooting and made it clear that he took this very ill of him. The man defended himself saying that not only had the Islanders tried to steal his gun but that he had been threatened with stones. This was not believed by witnesses who stated that in the great number of Islanders present, all had shown great friendliness toward them, and they considered him a "coward" who acted out of fear and nervousness. No punishment was reported.

The Final Humiliation • The fleet of Roggeveen had turned west from Easter Island. They touched several other small islands and in the Tuamotu archipelago they lost the *Africaansche Galey*, their smallest ship. They never found Southland. In the meantime, a great part of the crew was suffering from the dreaded scurvy and most of the food supply had seriously deteriorated. On 2 July 1722, another ship's council was held and it was decided not to return the way they had come, against prevailing winds and currents, but to continue west to the East Indies, an easier way and one in which they certainly would find fresh food supplies. They knew that this route would lead them through V.O.C. territory but, as they had no intention to trade there, they assumed that they would not violate the charter. This proved to be a disastrous mistake: as soon as Roggeveen had passed the island of New Guinea (the border of the charter territory) he was sighted by the V.O.C. On 8 September 1722 the V.O.C. representative on the island of Buru in the Moluccas reported to his superior on Ambon that he had contact with Jan Koster, captain of the Arent. On 19 September this superior sent a

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Poike Ditch continued...

Carlyle S. Smith



Dr. Smith exploring Vai a Heva, 1955.

Carlyle Shreeve Smith, professor emeritus and curator emeritus of Anthropology, University of Kansas, was honored at the annual meeting of the Society for Historical Archaeology in Tucson, Arizona, in January 1990, as the recipient of the J.C. Harrington Medal in Historical Archaeology (1989). Aside from his work on Easter Island, Smith is equally well-known for his research in the Great Plains, his contributions to the early development of historical archaeology, and his studies in the evolution and history of firearms (nearly a third of his publications are on topics dealing with the identification of firearms). Smith's interest in firearms led him to research and translation of documents on gunflint manufacture which he coupled with his field work at gunflint production sites in France and Italy. Noted for his use of the "direct historical approach," he relied heavily on ethnographic analogy. Since his retirement, he has devoted his time to research, writing and consultation.

Rapanuiphiles will recognize Smith for his excavations and research on Easter Island (see *The Archaeology of Easter Island, Reports of the Norwegian Archaeological Expedition to Easter Island and the East Pacific*, Vols. 1-2 [1961,1965]. Smith's reports in Vol. 1 include: A temporal sequence derived from certain Ahu; Two habitation caves; The Maunga Ahuhepa house site; Tuu-ko-ihu village; The Poike ditch; and Radio carbon dates from Easter Island. In Vol.2, Test excavations and surveys of miscellaneous sites on the island of Rapa Iti; and The burial complex on the island of Rapa Iti.)

extends from Hotu-iti on the south coast, past the crater of Rano Raraku, to the shores of La Perouse Bay on the north coast. To the east, at Poike, the field of lava gives way abruptly to a grassy slope nearly devoid of stones."

The slope rises steeply until it reaches an elevation of about 100 m above the plain. At this level a line of some twenty to thirty elongated depressions, each measuring about 100 m in length, extends from north to south. The depressions range from barely perceptible swales to marked declivities of from 1 to 3 m in depth. Each well-marked depression measures from 10 to 15 m in width, and is separated by an interval of about 5 m from the next. Immediately to the east is a parallel line of elongated mounds about 1 m in height, from 5 to 10 m in width, and of lengths equal to the bordering depressions. The gaps between the mounds coincide with the intervals between the depressions.

Behind the mounds to the east the surface is level, but after a short distance it begins to rise more and more steeply until it attains an elevation of some 400 m at the rim of the crater of Pua Katiki, the volcano dominating Poike.

To the archaeologically trained observer the site stands out in sharp contrast with natural features, and is readily identifiable as the work of man. Here is a series of excavations with the spoil piles still in evidence along one side. Deposition by water and wind erosion has nearly filled the excavation and the process is continuing."

A summary of my work at the site follows along with some new

conclusions (Smith 1961:385-391, fig. 98, p. 66). No consideration of the dating of the ditch and the mound is made in this paper. Excavations at Poike Ditch were begun on December 9 and terminated on December 16, 1955, by a group of local men under my direction. Six test pits were dug, three in one segment of the ditch and one in each of three other segments along a line about 300 m long, starting near the southern end of the site. In each pit, the walls were carefully straightened and smoothed, revealing bands of black and red deposits composed of carbon underlain by burned earth. Test pit 3 was extended east and west to form the trench which was the major excavation unit. The completed trench measured 1.5 m in width, 29.5 m in length and ranged from 50 cm to 3.35 m in depth below the surface.

The nature of the fill of the ditch and the accumulation of excavated soil representing the mound are evident when the two profiles are carefully examined and keyed into the symbols. (See Figure on page 33.) It is also evident that the ditch was dug between two faces of lava. My interpretation is that of the original cliff on the western side of Poike split vertically as is typical of tropical weathering. However the outer mass was held in place by the steady accumulation of the talus plus the deposition of water deposited soil from Poike. The digging of the ditch in prehistoric times was facilitated by the presence of soft soil between the two rock faces. It is apparent that the mound represents soil carried out of the ditch and placed upon a pre-existing ground surface.

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Artifacts found consisted of stone slabs, some displaying alteration, a large pitted stone, three adzes, one piece of obsidian worked on one edge, and three putative sling stones. The "sling stones" were thought to have served some other use when I discussed their nature with Y. H. Sinoto on a number of occasions. All the of the artifacts are now at the Museo Nacional de Historia Natural in Santiago, Chile. Note that no *mata'a* were found.

In my opinion the carbon underlain by burned earth is evidence for more intensive burning than that resulting from grass fires. To account for the ditch and the artificial mounds there are three hypotheses to consider:

1. There must have been a great demand for food to feed the workers at the Rano Raraku quarry. A deep ditch for plantings would have protected crops from the wind. Water running down the slope of Poike could have been controlled at the intervals between the mounds. Burning stalks and leaves after harvest would account for the evidence of very hot fires in the ditch.

2. The ditch could have served as a series of ovens (*umu*) for the preparation of food to be eaten by workers at Rano Raraku. Fires to heat the soil in pits would account for layers of burned earth and carbon. Further, the traditional name for the ditch is *Ko te umu o te Hanau Eepe* (the earth oven of the Hanau Eepe).

3. I now consider the function of the ditch and mounds as a fortification less likely even though the ditch could have served as a hinderance to defenders behind the mounds. That such a fortification was discontinuous and could be outflanked at either end might not have been thought of as any more disadvantageous than the Maginot Line was to the French before 1940.

The most important proof of the hand of man at the Poike Ditch is the presence of the series of artificial mounds. Visitors to the island should go and see for themselves and not rely on the opinions of geologists, ethnologists, and archaeologists who have not dug a trench through one of them.

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Carlisle Smith directing excavation of Poike ditch, 1955.

SERNATUR to Invest \$54 Million Pesos in Rapa Nui Improvements

Project for recuperation of *moais* of Isla de Pascua has top priority on list for the present year

SERNATUR, the National tourist office, has four big projects slated for Rapa Nui: 1) to encourage small investors to consider tourist opportunities locally; 2) modernize the information service to tourists; 3) improve signs and labels directing tourists; and 4) to work on "the recuperation of these national monuments (*the moai*) that suffer from the gradual and progressive deterioration to the extent that they could be lost if means of preservation are not adopted." The total investment will be \$180,000 US.

For the four projects they have budgeted \$15 million, \$4 million, \$25 million and \$10 million pesos, respectively.

A Look Backward...

Many stories are told about sheep rustling during the "old days" when the bulk of the island was turned into one vast sheep ranch. The propensity of the islanders for helping themselves to an impromptu lamb barbeque was a constant irritation to those who managed the ranch.

Stories are told of the prowess of islanders who could gallop through a herd, grab a sheep on the run, skin it out and be off with the carcass in five minutes. From the numbers of sheep bones in nooks and crannies around the island, this must have happened often. My favorite "sheep" story concerns the fisherman who was arrested for having a sheep in his boat; his alibi was that he had, in reality, rescued it—for it was "swimming away from the island."

Now that the sheep are gone from the island, I wonder if a new set of folklore will be forthcoming in regard to the cattle that have replaced them.

A.M. Smith, Seattle

Historical Summary of "Merahi Metua No Tehamana" and the Writing of Easter Island

by Francisco Mellen Blanco, Madrid, Spain

[In RNJ Vol. 2(4), 1988-89, Emily Mulloy reported on rongorongo symbols in a painting by Gauguin; this contribution by Mellen expands our knowledge of the symbols used in the painting.]



The Crucifixion,
woodcut by Gauguin

According to some authors, the title of this painting is "Tehamana's farewell," but Governor Bouge translated it as "Tehamana's ancestors" and other authors have referred to it as "The woman with a fan."

It is a 75 x 35 cm oil painting, painted in Tahiti in 1893. It represents a beautiful Polynesian girl, probably Tehura, Gauguin's *vahine* from 1892 to 1893. This is how the painter himself calls her in his book *Noa-Noa*. She is wearing a white and dark blue striped dress and is holding a fan in her left hand; behind her are two slender figures like spirit shades and another frontward facing figure in a praying pose similar to the idols that Gauguin used to paint in some other pictures, such as "Parau hanohano" (1892), "Mahana no atua" (1894), "D'ou venons-nous...." (1897), "Te Pape Nave-nave" (1989), etc. Above these figures on the top side of the painting, in two different lines, are 11 signs of

Easter Island writing "kohau rongo-rongo." The signs do not have the boustrophedon structure used on the Easter Island tablets; however, they were painted by Gauguin. He probably copied them from a publication which referred to Bishop Tepano Jaussen's tablets since most of the signs on the painting are also on the tablet "Tahua."

This is one of the first tablets sent from Easter Island to the Bishop of Tahiti. We suppose that Gauguin chose those signs which he considered more suitable for his picture, being unknown to him whether they were related or not.

Gauguin also carved the enigmatical "kohau rongo-rongo" writing in the wood carving known as "The Crucifixion," made in Punaauia around 1897. The signs are on both sides of the crucified Christ, eight on each side in four different lines. Above the Christ are two negro-like figures and some geometrical figures on top. This carving belongs to Dr. Paressant's collection from Nantes (a copy can be seen at the Gauguin Museum in Tahiti).

How did Gauguin know about this writing? After investigating Gauguin's life in the Polynesian islands we know that Mr. Goupil,

a colonist who lived in Tahiti, lent him a book titled *Voyage aux îles du Gran Ocean*, which was written in 1835 by Mr. Moerenhout when he was General Consul of the United States in the Oceanic Islands.

The book describes the Maori worship and traditions together with more narrations from the natives of Tahiti and maybe some Rapanui emigrants, that Gauguin included later on in his book *Noa-Noa* and *Ancien culte Mahorie*.

On February 18, 1895, during a Gauguin auction, no buyer paid the 300 Franks requested. The painting has belonged to Daniel de Monfreid; Mme. Daniel de Monfreid; Mme. Huc de Monfreid; J. Seligman, Paris-New York; Stephen C. Clark, New York; Collection McCormick, Chicago; and now it is in the Art Institute of Chicago.

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Pacific Science Congress, Honolulu 1991

Dr Nancy Pollock is organizing a Session on Kava for the Pacific Science Congress.
Individuals with an interest in this subject and this Session, contact:

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Two Backward Glances

Dr. Steven R. Fischer

A Case Study in International (Mis)Understanding on Old Rapanui

It was in the Year of Our Lord 1864. Brother Eugène Eyraud of the Order of the Sacred Hearts had been outposted on Rapanui as the only European among hostile islanders back in January, to proselyte as best he could. By August, his superiors and friends in the Order, well aware that those horrible rumors of cannibalism on Rapanui were only too true, were growing understandably worried: Was their Brother Eugène even alive? they were now asking in anxious letters between Tahiti and Valparaíso, Chile.

To find this out, Father Barnabé Castan, accompanied by Brother Hugues, left Valparaíso on the 25th of August on the Chilean schooner *Térèse-Ramos*, bound for the planet's most isolated island.

Father Barnabé had already spent some time in the "Sandwich Islands" (Hawai'i) missioning for the same Order of the Sacred Hearts, the Roman Catholic Church's principal missionary society. Perhaps this explains why he now felt assured by the belief that his knowledge of "Sandwichese," as he called it, could help him discover "what had become of Brother Eugène," as he later penned in his detailed report to the Very Reverend Father Superior General in Paris (published in the *Annales de la Propagation de la Foi* [Lyon] 38 [1866], 139-145.)

This assumption would lead, however, to a veritable comedy of errors.

Sighting Rapanui on the 10th of October, the *Térèse-Ramos* attempted to put into Cook Bay, Hangaroa, early the next morning. But the easterly blew too fiercely; three to four hours were soon wasted. The French standard had quickly been topmasted, however, soon to be answered on the shore—now "covered with natives"—by a white flag, presumably to indicate where exactly to anchor and to announce a Pacific welcome.

As the schooner approached, the "Kanacs," who were perched on the cliffs, began crying out (as Father Barnabé gives it):

"*Holo mai! Holo mai!*"

"You understand what they're saying?" asked the captain, standing alongside the priest.

"Perfectly," replied Father Barnabé, "it means 'Come! Come!' It's pure Sandwichese!"

Actually, the Rapanui were not shouting the Hawai'ian *holo mai* 'come, sail this way,' they were rather encouraging the schooner with Rapanui *horou mai* (= *ka horou mai*) 'come quickly, get a move on!'—perhaps because of an imminent danger in this anything but safe anchorage. (The standard Rapanui greeting at this time was *koho mai* 'come, welcome'.)

Whereupon Father Barnabé, waving his handkerchief, gaily shouted back at them in the Hawai'ian language, "*Holo mai! Holo mai!*" which was of course understood by those on the shore as, "Get a move on! Get a move on!"

As if in response to the priest's enthusiastic injunction, in no time at all a woman had swum out to the schooner and clambered on board, faced Father Barnabé, made the sign of the cross, then recited the *Pater noster*, the *Ave Maria*, and the *Credo* in Tahitian, to his utter surprise.

"To encourage her," he recited in return the very same prayers in "Sandwichese":

"She understood me very well," he boasted further in his letter to the Superior General.

Other Rapanui soon flooded over the gunwales, who appeared equally keen to demonstrate their linguistic prowess to the strangely clad European. Of course, Father Barnabé, anything but a fool, was quick to ask them who it was had instructed them in these "words so lovely and so fine," anxious to learn if Brother Eugène were still alive.

"*Papaa, papaa!*" they loudly replied, which Father Barnabé this time correctly took to mean "foreigner, white man."

"And where is he, this *papaa*?" he asked nervously.

They pointed to a small hut over on the shore. Breathing a sigh of relief, Father Barnabé concluded this must mean Brother Eugène could possibly still be this side of Paradise. But to make absolutely certain, he then asked the Rapanui, in his finest "Sandwichese" and doubtless with no little trepidation:

"And do you have great affection for this *papaa*?"

"No!"

It appears that the unrecorded Hawai'ian word Father Barnabé had so unhappily chosen for 'to love well, to have great affection for' actually meant in the considerably different Rapanui tongue "to kill..."

Fortunately, the linguistic transgression was duly recognized and promptly remitted. Whereupon a "nearly naked" Brother Eugène finally appeared, who, though not all that anxious to abandon his Rapanui, reluctantly agreed to return to Valparaíso to assist those who would be sent later to establish a permanent Catholic mission on the island.

Little did Brother Eugène Eyraud realize at the time, however, that it would be he himself, with three others, who would establish this first short-lived mission on Rapanui in 1866, and perish there of pulmonary tuberculosis together with most of his converts two years later, at the age of 48.

The Lost Journal of Adam Smith

When the famous French writer Pierre Loti, then an Aspirant First Class of the French Navy and still using exclusively his real name of Julian Viaud, visited Rapa Nui on *La Flore* in 1872, he found the sole remaining resident European on the island to be an old Dane by the name of Adam Smith (also Smitt), who had a Rapanui wife and apparently had moved into one of the abandoned missionary houses at Hangaroa. Loti visited Smith's house one day when Smith was out, and looking around inside the house he saw (translating from the original French):

"A large register was open before me on one table; glancing at it out of distraction, I read there several English sentences.

"It was the private journal of the Dane. He was writing in it every day his impressions, his difficulties with the natives, all the circumstances of his singular life." Never again, in any of the subsequent reports of this time from Rapa Nui, do we hear of this private journal of Adam Smith. Beyond a doubt, the discovery of this journal, should it still exist somewhere, would clarify many of the unclear historical events of this period, and contribute tremendously to our knowledge of late 19th century rapanui customs and behavior, especially as seen and felt by a contemporary European who was perhaps the first in history to have "gone Rapanui." If anyone has any further knowledge of the later whereabouts of Adam Smith's journal, would he please contact me at the address on page 43 of this issue of *RNJ*. It would be an immeasurable loss if this valuable document had been destroyed after Adam Smith's death on Rapa Nui.



Juggling Dates and Swivelling Statues: Paul Bahn's Objectivity

By Arne Skjølsvold, Ph.D., Kon Tiki Museum

In his review of the first volume of *The Kon-Tiki Museum Occasional Papers* [RNJ 4 (2), 1990] Paul G. Bahn is criticising the lack of objectivity in the paper written by Gonzalo Figueroa and the undersigned. On this background it is interesting to note how his own subjectivity (infected by an antagonistic attitude toward Thor Heyerdahl) has influenced his review. Already in the headline and in the opening sentence he sets the tone: "Juggling Dates and Swivelling Statues." "This glossy new publication from Kon-Tiki Land..." and he continues: "The first paper attempts unsuccessfully to pull a date out of the ground for Tukuturi/Tuturi, Easter Island's answer to Al Jolson (possibly another clue there to contact with the New World??)."

Our excavation around the kneeling statue in Rano Raraku was carried out in the hope of getting relevant organic material for a ^{14}C -dating of the sculpture. We got 3 samples of which 2 were too small for traditional ^{14}C -datings. Since Norway has no laboratory for accelerator datings using the AMS-technique, we started the dating procedure with a traditional dating of a wooden stick since there was a reasonable chance that this find was contemporary with the carving of the statue. The result of the dating was 180 ± 40 years B.P., with a calibrated age of 1715 ± 85 years (Masca), a date which was quite unlikely since it would mean that the statue was carved around the arrival of the first Europeans. In order to eliminate possible errors, a control date of the same stick was performed, giving the slightly older date of 230 ± 60 years B.P. The calibrated age was $\text{AD } 1605 \pm 155$ years (Masca). The standard deviation taken into account, these two dates might be considered contemporaneous. Concerning the first date the maximum age would be $\text{AD } 1630$,

a result which theoretically would link the two dates. $\text{AD } 1630$ is almost 100 years earlier than the arrival of the first Europeans, and at this date we have indications that statues were still manufactured.

Instead of accepting this date without further ado (which one might get the impression that Bahn would have done) we submitted (for control dates) the two charcoal samples for accelerator dating using the AMS-technique. Both the new dates obtained were considerably older than the previous dates, and the older of the two was considered the most reliable since the sample was taken from a very hardpacked stratum sealed by a clearly defined "floor" which seemed to guarantee its undisturbed condition. As evident from our description of this layer the relationship with the carving of the statue seemed obvious.

Exact dating in archaeology is very often problematic even with the use of the ^{14}C -method, since there are so many sources of error. The dating of the statue in question makes no exception in this respect. However the authors' attempt to date the sculpture was based on an objective and thorough evaluation of the ^{14}C -datings which were at hand. Besides it is worth bearing in mind that an early dating of Tukuturi is supported by the findings of related statue fragments in the last decades.

As for the paper on the moving of a statue in Tongariki, Bahn is requiring illustrations of any wear patterns on the sculpture. In this regard we have to disappoint him, since there was no such wear because the statue was protected with reed paddings put underneath the ropes. But we may assure Bahn that if our experiment had caused damage to the statue, we would have reported it.

Easter Island and South Africa?

W. Wilfried Schuhmacher

"It is more important that a proposition be interesting than that it be true. But of course a true proposition is more apt to be interesting than a false one."

—Alfred N. Whitehead,
Adventurers of Ideas, Cambridge 1933

In the course of time many people have felt inclined to contribute to the "mystery" of Easter Island with their more or less "wild" solutions. To give an example, Fonck (1973) even postulated a connection to North Africa focusing on a match between "berber" (according to him, *berebere* = "down") and Easter Island *vere* (vere), meaning "down, hair, beard." However the word Berber—via Arabic—is derived from the Greek barbaros "non-Greek." Even if it meant "beard" it would have come from the Latin *barba*.

Even a thick volume of a bibliography containing of all the theories would not be without a South African version. In 1946, coming straight from Nigeria where he had been for thirty years, M.D.W. Jeffreys accepted the post of Senior Lecturer in Social Anthropology

at the University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. While lecturing on Bantu and Hottentot cattle customs, he had extra time to deal with other ideas, as is seen in his article on a connection between Easter Island's *rongorongo* script and that of the Indus Valley (Jeffreys 1947). Ten years later, Alfred Métraux presented in a South African journal the script's "state of the art" (Métraux 1957).

In contrast, yet another wildly improbable theory was espoused that related Easter Island to South Africa: Williams (1949) postulated, on the basis of the Easter Island script, a world wide migration of a common stock of Early Man from South Africa via ancient Egypt and the Indus Valley to Easter Island.

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Jeffreys, M.D.W. 1947. "Mohenjodaro and Easter Island," *Man*, Vol. 47(73):67-68.
Métraux, A. 1957. "The mystery of the Easter Island script." *South African Journal of Science*, Vol. 53:326-328.
Williams, T. 1949. "Was South Africa the cradle of mankind?" *The Nongqai*, December:1510-1511.

Recent Publications

First International Congress Easter Island and East Polynesia, Vol.1. Edited by Claudio Cristino F.; Patricia Vargas C.; Roberto Izaurieta S.; and Reginald Budd P. Universidad de Chile, Facultad de Arquitectura y Urbanismo; Instituto de Estudios, Isla de Pascua, 1988. Softcover, 173 pp., maps, black and white illustrations. In English.

Reviewed by Frank G. Bock, Ph.D.

The "First International Congress on Easter Island and East Polynesia" was held in Hanga Roa, Easter Island, September 6-12, 1984. The meeting brought together over 80 archaeologists and anthropologists, as well as an equal number of non-participating observers, with the intent of presenting and sharing a diverse accumulation of thoughts, theories, and theses on Polynesia.

This was an extraordinary week of papers, workshops, field trips and informal get-togethers. A total of 55 papers were delivered, touching on myriad subjects, ranging from History and Acculturation to Linguistics and Arts, with extended stops at Ethics, Law, Settlement, Rock Art and Statuary.

A selection of 11 of those 55 papers presented at the Congress has been published in this Volume 1, by Universidad de Chile, Facultad de Arquitectura y Urbanismo, and the Instituto de Estudios, Isla de Pascua. Although this selection does include some excellent research on Polynesian cultures, there is no explanation as to why the editors made their arbitrary decisions disregarding four-fifths of the papers presented.

The best researched paper in Volume 1 is by Roger C. Green. His talk, titled "Subgrouping of the Rapanui Language of Easter Island in Polynesia and its Implications for East Polynesia Prehistory," is a thorough discussion of prior linguistic studies, and a conclusion based on solid evidence. Likewise, Anderson and McFagden have presented a well documented paper on the evidence at return voyaging from New Zealand to East Polynesia by obsidian examination.

Ostensibly presented as a broad scope of all Polynesia, this publication is rather biased toward Easter Island: Eight of the 11 essays are focused on Rapa Nui. This is perhaps understandable in light of the Chilean publishers, and the editors' positions. Still, because of this limitation, the reader is left unaware of some excellent papers such as Bengt Danielsson's "Enforced Enculturation in Eastern Polynesia," or the discussions by Nicholas Stanley Price and Guillermo Joiko on archaeological conservation.

There are minor drawbacks, basically in the proof-reading/mechanics-of-publishing categories. Typographical errors abound (indeed the title of Green's article states "Polynesian" where it should be "Polynesia") and the photographic illustrations are often too dark to show detail. Yet these are nearly negligible as they seldom interfere with the continuity of thought expressed.

The Congress itself, while professing to encourage an "... exchange (of) information on current research concerning East Polynesia and Easter Island..." in effect was more a gathering of opinions to be spoken with the hope that they would influence others to think as each participant thought. The volume tends to reflect this somewhat self-centered attitude. How much better, and truer to its premise, if a publication could have reflected the ideas

bandied about in the workshops and informal discussions where to this reviewer, real progress was made.

Still it is to the editors credit that Volume 1 of the Congress' papers has seen the light of day, and hopefully there will be future volumes that will continue to give the reader an insight into the significance of Polynesian archaeology and anthropology.

More Publications

• Dye, Tom and David W. Steadman. Polynesian Ancestors and their Animal World. In *American Scientist*, 78:207-215. May-June 1990.

• The *Pitcairn Miscellany* is a periodical from Pitcairn Island that is printed approximately ten times a year, although it can only be sent out when ships arrive. The Miscellany generally has two pages, printed on each side, and carries local news, news of Pitcairners overseas and reflections on life in this remote island with fewer than 70 inhabitants. For subscription information contact: L.Buckley, Editor; The Pitcairn Miscellany; Pitcairn Island, South Pacific Ocean (Via New Zealand).

• *The Sierra Club Guide to the Islands of Polynesia, Melanesia and Micronesia*, by Susanna Margolis (1988). Sierra Club Books, 730 Polk Street, San Francisco, CA 94109.

Art of Polynesia: Selections from the Hemmeter Collection of Polynesian Art. 1989. Hemmeter Publishing Corporation, No.1 Capitol District, Honolulu, HI 96813.

• A Quarterly of News and Views on the Pacific Islands, *Tok Blong SPPF*, has as its aim the promotion of awareness of development, social justice and other issues of importance to the peoples of the South Pacific. It is available to donors to SPPF (South Pacific Peoples Foundation of Canada) with a minimum of \$15 year. For information, write Tok Blong SPPF, 409-620 View St., Victoria B.C., Canada V8W 1J6.

• Schuhmacher, W. Wilfried. In Thor Heyerdahl's Wake: Some Polynesian-South American "Wörter-und-Sachen" Parallels. In *Le Langage et l'Homme*, Vol. XXV(2-3):181-185. 1990.

• Schuhmacher, W. Wilfried. "Thor Heyerdahl verkehrt": Kamen die Polynsier bis nach Südamerika? In *Ethnologica Americana* 26/1, Nr.116:1268-1270, 1990.

• Méllen Blanco, F. Una ma'ea ika de la Isla de Pascua. In *ARS Praehistorica* V/VI:172-276; 1986-87.

• Van Tilburg, Jo Anne. Respect for Rapa Nui: exhibition and conservation of Easter Island stone statues. *Antiquity* 64(243):249-58, 1990.

• Rolett, Barry. Hanamiai: Changing subsistence and ecology in the prehistory of Tahuata (Marquesas Islands, French Polynesia); Ph.D. Dissertation, Yale University, 1989.

Abstract: An archaeological investigation of Tahuata, in the southern Marquesas Islands, French Polynesia, reveals major shifts in prehistoric subsistence and ecology. As one of the most geographically isolated island groups in the Pacific, the Marquesas offer an excellent example of independent development in the evolution of a Polynesian culture. Excavation of a coastal habitation site in Hanamiai Valley on Tahuata documents a continuous sequence of occupations beginning with an initial settlement around A.D. 1100, more than a thousand years after colonization of the

Continued on bottom of following page ...

Rapanui's *Tangata Manu* on German Television

by Dr. Steven R. Fischer

11:30-11:40 ARD (Channel One), Sunday 3 June 1990:
 "Der Kult des Vogelmannes: Skulpturen der Osterinsel"
 (The Cult of the Birdman: Sculptures of Rapanui"); Heide-
 Margaret Esen-Baur, Telescript, Ray Muller, Director.

In the series "100 Meisterwerke" ("100 Masterpieces"), presented under the ecological series "Eine Welt für Alle" ("A World for Everyone") and introduced by Rolf Seelmann-Eggebert.

Signaling Germany's increasing interest in and awareness of Rapanui's unique culture, doubtless a direct result of Dr. Esen-Baur's own highly successful Senckenberg Museum Exhibition in Frankfurt (1989), this fascinating ten-minute introduction to the *tangata-manu* cult opens with many colorful vistas of the Rapanui coast and the strewn Rano Raraku *moai* before comparing in minute detail the Leningrad and New York *tangata-manu* wooden sculptures in varying parallel poses and under dramatic lighting to an informative and well-documented German commentary.

The *rongorongo* tablets that were featured at the Frankfurt Exhibition—"Aruku-Kurenga," "Mamari" and the "Large Lenin-grad"—are treated as well in spectacularly lighted revolving shots,

with special close-ups of the "Makemake-like" *rona* (glyphs) shown also on various stone artifacts.

A wide variety of *tangata-manu* sculptures then follows, to demonstrate their incredible range of sizes, beak forms and body shapes: "They share alone a common concept: They express a mythical dual being, half man, half bird." After this is portrayed a selection of stone *komari* ("vulva") motifs, with a comment on their religious and mythological significance ("fertility symbolism") on Rapanui of old.

At the very close of the film, we encounter once more the two enormous epoxy-resin *moai* of the Frankfurt Exhibition, cast from the originals at Rano Raraku, in a stark black/white revolving scan only too reminiscent of their Brussels presentation (1990).

In all, a brief, but extremely well-done introduction to the *tangata-manu* cult and sculptures and to Rapanui history and culture in general for the German-speaking audiences (the ARD, Channel One, reaches some 90 million-plus viewers in Germany, Austria, Switzerland and also in many bordering countries) that will no doubt lead to greater German-language attention to things Rapanui in the near future.

The Rapa Nui Festival on Easter Island

At the southeastern tip of the Polynesian triangle lies windswept Easter Island, the most remote inhabited place on the planet. Located 2300 miles west of Chile and surrounded by an immense ocean as blue as the sky, this tiny dot of land is 64 square miles of rocky grassland, extinct volcanos and steep ocean cliffs. It is a gentle land, a special place with a magical feel in the air, where its name alone conjures an image of massive, enigmatic statues.

Less well-known are the cave paintings and spectacular bas relief petroglyphs carved on boulders, on lava, and even on some of the statues. This eerie art calls up pagan rituals that took place centuries ago.

In early February of each year, the inhabitants celebrate the Rapa Nui Festival. Polynesians dressed in hand-painted barkcloth and sensuous grass skirts recreate the centuries-old dances of their ancestors. As the light of torches flashes on the magnificent monuments, dancers sway in and out of the shadows to hypnotic chants and rhythmic percussion.

Far Horizons proudly presents a 12 day trip that includes one week on Easter Island at the time of the Festival. The trip will be led by archaeologist Georgia Lee, Ph.D. Dr. Lee's experience includes extensive research and work on Easter Island where she directed field expeditions for the University of California.

A one week extension is available to northern Chile to see the "Nazca Lines" and the nearby archaeological sites.

Trip departure • February 1, 1991

Ground cost is \$2295 (Northern Chile extension \$900)

Ladeco air cost from Miami is \$1399

Trip limited to 15 participants.

Publications continued from previous page...

Marquesas, and continuing until the mid-nineteenth century. Quantitative analyses of the faunal remains and artifacts provide new comparative data for studying the relationship between long-term changes in subsistence, technology and environment.

Faunal analyses indicate that subsistence strategies of the earliest inhabitants centered around fishing but also included heavy exploitation of birds, turtles, and shellfish, species abundant in what was apparently a pristine environment when Hanamiai was first settled. Populations of native birds, particularly ground-nesting species and ones which were flightless, or nearly so, were drastically depleted, some to the point of local extirpation or extinction, within 300 years after initial settlement of Hanamiai. This pattern is similar to ones documented for periods of island colonization elsewhere in the Marquesas and throughout Polynesia.

Depletion of populations of birds and other wild species, and a growing reliance on agriculture linked with pig breeding, transformed the Hanamiai subsistence system from a broad spectrum adaptation to one more narrowly focussed. The evidence also documents a shift, reflected both in faunal remains and in fishing technology, from diversified exploitation of pelagic, deep-sea, and inshore marine environments to a narrow focus on inshore waters. This transition is linked with widespread cultural changes that occurred throughout the northern and southern Marquesas.

The Hanamiai findings demonstrate that although different islands in the Marquesas underwent similar colonization sequences of changing subsistence and ecology, these sequences began at various points in time spanning more than a thousand years. The results are significant in showing that the colonization process in this archipelago was a recurrent one. The results also demonstrate that inter-island variation between sequences of subsistence change reflects adaptation to different ecological settings.

Letters & Responses

To all of you rapanuiphiles who have written and provided strokes, we say "thanks, we needed that." Recent kudos include the following:

"*Rapa Nui Journal* gets better with every issue"; "I not only enjoy your Journal—I devour every word" and, "The latest *RNJ*, as always, brought much of interest plus a bit of nostalgic longing"; "[*RNJ* is] an exceptionally interesting and informative newsletter....Keep up the great work."

Maruru korua.

[Which means, "thanks, guys"].

Whalebone Rongorongo

I would like to correct a minor error that first appeared in Heyerdahl's *The Art of Easter Island* (1975:204). He mentioned a fragment of an inscribed spermwhale bone "reportedly found in a cave (now in the possession of K.A. Dixon...) completely covered with *rongorongo* signs that have the aspect of being genuine." Davis-Drake referred to this information in his recent paper in *RNJ* 4(1):13.

The specimen was never in my possession except briefly in 1966 in order to make photographs and a mold of the inscribed surface. It was loaned to me for the purpose through the kindness of Dr. William J. Wallace, then of the University of Southern California. It had been loaned to Dr. Wallace by a Navy man who had visited Easter Island during World War II. The specimen is currently in the possession of Dr. Wallace on long-term loan.

If authentic, it would be an important addition to the inventory of texts. On the other hand, one must always be suspicious of supposed antiquities that lack verifiable context, as in this case. Even if made for the tourist trade by an Easter Islander, it could still be of interest.

Therefore, in 1966 I sent photographs and plaster casts made from the latex mold to three of the institutions that were active in Easter Island studies at the time. My intent was to make it available for scholars to test its authenticity by examining the craftsmanship and by comparing the form and sequence of glyphic elements. It might be possible to determine whether this specimen is an obvious copy of an authentic specimen which had been used as a model, or whether it might be genuine if it should prove to be unique within the range of variation that has the same character as *rongorongo* known to be authentic.

After nearly a quarter-century, the first expression of interest that has come to my notice was the inquiry this year from Dr. Steven Fischer (Meersburg, West Germany), who hoped to locate the specimen or illustrations of it to include in his full inventory and study of Easter Island scripts. He now has casts and photographs of the whalebone specimen, and on this basis he has apparently solved the problem. He has a most convincing and interesting analysis.

I hope this note will serve to clarify the situation until publication of Dr. Fischer's analysis and his full description of the specimen and its history.

Keith A. Dixon,
Dept. of Anthropology,
California State University,
Long Beach, CA 90840

The First Journal of Polynesian Philology

Rongorongo Studies: A Forum for Polynesian Philology will commence publication with Volume 1, Number 1, in Summer 1991. As the first international scholarly journal dedicated exclusively to the investigation of all aspects of Polynesian philology, it will fill a long standing lacuna in international studies. It will provide a new forum for all philologists whose field of research involves ancient Polynesian chants, songs, tales, legends, myths, genealogies, etc., yet will include reviews and discussions of the modern literature of Polynesia as well. In addition, it will offer serious studies in Polynesian diachronic and synchronic linguistics. Articles of up to eight pages in English, French, Spanish and German are now being invited.

Appearing twice annually (Summer/Winter), *Rongorongo Studies* provides an international forum for serious scholarship in Polynesian philology. Submissions of up to eight typewritten pages and of short notes of scholarly interest are invited in English, French, German, and Spanish; articles not in English should include an English abstract. The Editor cannot be responsible for unsolicited material.

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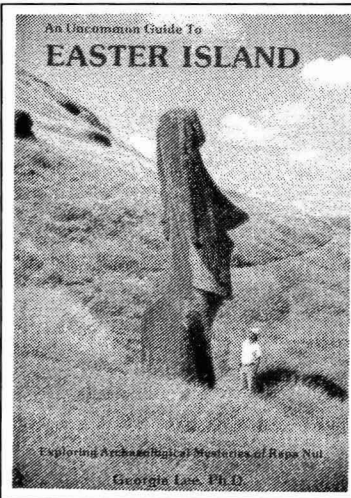
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A recent article by Robert Koll, "The Mechanics of Reading Easter Island's *Rongorongo* Tablets," *RNJ* 4 (2), Summer 1990, unwittingly demonstrates what confusion can ensue when imagination obtains over erudition. Koll's erroneous statements and hypotheses must be addressed, if only to do justice to the contributions of so many generations of earnest scholars of the classical *rongorongo* script of Rapanui.

First of all, *rongorongo* does not mean "the hieroglyphic writing of Easter Island," as Koll asserts. *RAP rongorongo* (and its related historical forms in the Tuamotus, Marquesas, and Gambiers; cf. Stimson/Marshall 1964:459, Handy 1923:354, Laval 1938:1, fn. 1, and 244, and Métraux 1940:392) means, in its historical sense, "chants, recitations, etc." and often, by extension, "those who teach and perform the chants, recitations, etc." The writing itself apparently had no generic name on Rapanui, bearing only those several names of the respective type of recitation.

Further, it is still a moot point whether the Rapanui "created a unique hieroglyphic script" in their isolation or as a direct result of European contact (cf. Emory 1972:63).

There is no evidence that "sharpened frigate bird bones" were ever used to carve the *rona* (glyphs) on the wooden *kohou*; orally attested as writing implements are only flakes of obsidian and sharks' teeth.

Barthel did not record "605 distinct *rongorongo* glyphs," demonstrating with this that these *rona* were pictographic rather than alphabetic letters and thus the tablets were mnemonic devices..." Barthel actually concluded (1958:314): "*Aus rund 120 Grundbestandteilen können etwa 1500-2000 verschiedene Kompositionen entwickelt werden.*" ("From ca. 120 basic components one can generate some 1500-2000 distinct constructions.")

The "old name of the boards" was not "*ko hau motu rongorongo*" which literally means 'lines of script for recitation.' Koll obviously has taken this directly from Englert (1972:74): "*ko hau motu mo rongorongo*," which, literally translated, means 'lines of script for recitation.' This formulation is Englert's own peculiar concoction, which Koll misquotes and passes on uncritically. This assumed "historical" designation for the inscribed artifacts would most likely be, according to the current state of scholarship, *kohou* (not *kohau*) *rongorongo*, (in her work notes, Routledge jots down *koho*; Fuentes 1960:764 f.; Campbell/Silva 1970:164), or "*a kohou* (=flat piece of wood, stick, wooden bar, staff, etc.) for recitation."

Using Métraux's 1957 inscription inventory (1957:183) of "only 21 tablets, one staff and 3 ['or four'] pectoral ornaments" is now regarded as outdated, not only because of subsequent discoveries of inscriptions, but also due to the necessity to include in any modern comprehensive inventory all "questionable" artifacts inscribed with "alternative Rapanui scripts" as well, these often showing a mixture of two or more script classes in one inscription, from the last 19th and the first half of the 20th century (cf. Campbell/Silva 1970 and Hoorebeeck 1977 and 1979).

It does Routledge an injustice to misquote her as saying only that the tablets disappeared as a result of "the introduction of Christianity" and that "the natives said that they burnt the tablets in compliance with the orders of the missionaries" (Routledge 1919:207).

Routledge actually declares this disappearance to coincide with the Peruvian (=international) raids and epidemics, and correctly documents also that "the Fathers, on the contrary, state that it was due to them that any were preserved. Some certainly were saved by their means..." (ibid.).

Koll further claims (p. 22) that only Englert (1972:74) correctly called the writing form of the *rongorongo* inscriptions "reversed boustrophedon." Yet this particular boustrophedonic form of Rapanui script was already described in detail — "the alternate reversion of the lines of hieroglyphic, as well as the ancient Greek method styled Boustrophedon" — by Harrison (1874:373), followed by many others.

Yet Koll's Achilles' heel would have to be his bold allegation that the "starting point" of the text" of any *rongorongo* inscription is still "unclear." Should one perhaps choose judiciously to ignore the independent testimonies of the contemporary Rapanui informants Metoro (Jaussen 1893:252) and Ure Vaeiko (Thomson 1891:516), one should at least acknowledge the impeccable objective logic of Harrison (1874:374f.) in this regard: "Since, too, the signs in the top line of each tablet, on both faces, stand upside down...it seems probable that the bottom line on each tablet, where it will be seen the signs stand upright, is intended to be read first."

As to Koll's unique and, at first glance, intriguing suggestion that the *rongorongo* inscriptions might possibly have been read "in an encircling manner" as a spiraling and not linear text, we have nevertheless hard scientific proof that this was not the case, quite apart from the contemporary "demonstrations" of Metoro (ca. 1874) and Ure Vaeiko (1886); Although very early researchers (Miklukho-Maklai 1872:81; Prévost de Longpérier 1874:153; Tylor, by Harrison 1876:250) had already noticed sign and group repetitions in the Rapanui inscriptions, it was the young Russian Kudrjavzev (1949:175-221) who first applied to these a highly detailed analytical study, later expanded by Butinov and Knorozov (1956:77-91), effectively demonstrating how entire textual segments were paralleled in different tablets. Barthel (1958:159) mentioned "examples where parallel sign groups occur specifically at the transition from one line to the next and thus the course of the text can be perfectly followed," but did not specify which. One year earlier, Ibarra Grasso (1957:157-159), in a little-known article from Buenos Aires, studying in depth both the "Small Santiago" and "Large Santiago Tablets," illustrated how the *rongorongo* script does in fact begin at the bottom left and proceeds linearly from left to right (with an "inverted" "Small Santiago" as his example).

Furthermore, amongst several examples one is urged to compare, for instance, above all the classical "Small Santiago Tablet" recto, lines 3-4, to the (possibly) late classical "London Tablet" recto, lines 4-5, and verso, line 1, to learn exactly how the texts were actually read; for one will find parallel texts not only continuing linearly on the following lines of both tablets, in reciprocally verifiable alternating segments, but also continuing linearly on the first line of the verso of the "London Tablet" as well.

Metoro and Ure Vaeiko did know exactly what they were doing, then, if only in regard to the manner in which they "read" or changed the *rongorongo* inscriptions before them.

Continued on following page ...

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Roggeveen continued...

letter back, reprimanding his man for not have reported what sort of people "these tramps" were and where they came from. He asks: were they perhaps from Ostende? (a city in Belgium famous for its pirates). When he gets the correct answer, Roggeveen has already continued to Japara on the north coast of Java. There he gets into real trouble. He is not allowed to land and he may not buy food. Roggeveen writes an emotional appeal to the Governor General, telling how he has suffered 61 dead on the trip, how 12 men are suffering from scurvy, etc. Then he learns he may only get water and no fresh vegetables or fruit, essential for the survival of his men. He continues to Batavia, the headquarters of V.O.C. But there his ships are confiscated; the little cargo they have on board is sold and the whole crew including Roggeveen arrested on orders of the Governor General himself for "breach of privilege." The V.O.C. wanted to show that it was not to be toyed with. On 25 September, the Governor General reported to his superiors, the famous "Council of Seventeen" in Amsterdam. The V.O.C. people, who also confiscated Roggeveen's journal, read in that document of the decision to return to the Netherlands via the Far East; this made the breach of the charter intentional and, therefore, even more serious. Towards the end of the year, Roggeveen and those of his crew who still survived were shipped back to the Netherlands as prisoners in a return fleet of the V.O.C. They arrived in July of 1723. When news of this reached Amsterdam, a terrible row broke out between the

W.I.C. and the V.O.C.: this was a great period for lawyers. We do not have to go into all the details here, but finally the V.O.C.—although it had appealed on its charter it did not dare to risk a verdict in court—agreed to an out-of-court settlement. It kept the two confiscated ships remaining in Batavia, but it paid the W.I.C. a compensation of 120,000 guilders (about \$60,000 at today's rate of exchange) which was, for that time, an enormous amount and certainly sufficient to build two new ships. Moreover it paid all the wages still due to the crew.

Thus ended the voyage of discovery: Southland not found and a return in humiliation. This must have been a bitter disappointment for Roggeveen for he was a good commander and navigator and he executed his instructions as humanely as possible.

Let us end with one of his intelligent and nicely worded deliberations about Easter Island: "As the Spaniards or other people cannot have been moved to establish colonies of Indians in these faraway islands, one can only conclude that the Indians that live in these newly discovered islands have been here for generation after generation and are children of Adam, although the human mind is incapable of understanding by which means they have ever arrived here." This is the enigma with which all subsequent visitors to Easter Island have been confronted.



Easter Egotism, a review

Paul G. Bahn, Ph.D.

The Kon-Tiki Man: Thor Heyerdahl by Christopher Ralling,
BBC Books, London 1990 (£ 16.95. 365 pp., ill.)
and "The Kon-Tiki Man" a 10 part TV series

Just when you thought it was safe to go back into the book stores, another Heyerdahl blockbuster arrives. The last issue of *RNJ* contained a letter that described *Easter Island, The Mystery Solved* as a "dishonest and self-serving book." Well, folks, you ain't seen nothing yet.

We in Britain have just had the dubious privilege of seeing a series of 10 programmes (each of 25 minutes) on the BBC devoted to the life and work of Thor Heyerdahl, and inevitably there is a glossy book to accompany it. The latter has the same format and the same mass of colour illustrations as *The Mystery Solved*, and thanks to the power of TV it was on the British bestseller lists for the duration of the series. Indeed, some major bookstores devoted entire windows to Heyerdahl displays that were centered around this volume, together with models of reed-ships, the recent Easter Island book (which previously got almost no attention over here) and a new paperback set of his various voyage-books, rushed out by his British publisher to cash in on the series.

The Kon-Tiki Man is described as "part biography and part autobiography," but the project is clearly Heyerdahl's, with Ralling (as producer and author) just along for the ride and to act as Boswell to Heyerdahl's Dr. Johnson. One can understand the appeal of a freebie to all these wonderful locations, but one might have hoped for more objectivity and accuracy from a TV producer who did such a fine job on earlier series like "The Voyage of Charles Darwin."

The ten TV shows covered the following: 1. Fatu Hiva; 2. Kon-Tiki; 3. Galapagos, Easter Island; 4. Easter Island; 5. Ra I; 6. Ra I and II; 7. Tigris, Bahrain; 8. Tigris, Oman, Mohenjo-Daro; 9. Maldives, Yemen; 10. Yemen, Tassili, Easter Island, Peru. All of this is covered in the book, though in 26 chapters rather than 10. There is, however, an index, which makes it more usable than *The Mystery Solved*.

For the purpose of this *RNJ* review, I shall confine my remarks to Easter Island, though there is a great deal that could be said about the other parts of the package. Despite the book's commercial success, I have seen only one other review, by Adam Kuper in *Nature* of May 10th (Vol.345, pp.123-4), which is highly recommended and ends by suggesting that the BBC should have broadcast the series in its religious slot!

The book's material on Easter Island is familiar to those already acquainted with Heyerdahl's other volumes; so, alas, are its "inaccuracies:" for example, it is claimed (p.146) that Routledge "made no attempt at any systematic excavations," and (p.155) that early observers thought the statues on the slopes of Rano Raraku comprised only head and shoulders, and that it was "Thor's archaeologists" who first revealed the rest of the bodies! The boat engraved on the torso of an excavated *moai* is inevitably described

(p.158) as a "reed ship, which could only mean that the islanders had once seen the real thing." As usual, Tukururi is compared with a statue at Tiahuanaco, and we are even told (p.161) that "from its position in the quarry it was probably much older than its giant long-eared brethren"!! Moreover, the caption (p.186) to a picture of a statue of Buddha from the Maldives reveals that Thor "was particularly intrigued by the figure's similarities to the ones on Easter Island"—personally, I cannot see the remotest resemblance! The Maldives also (p.290) have the same sophisticated masonry technique as Easter Island, South America and the Middle East—"what was the connection between the places?" It is mentioned (p.300) that if you drilled down through the globe from Easter Island you would come up at the Maldives, but this "curious fact" does not lead to speculations of long-distance tunnelling contacts.

In an amazing section written by Heyerdahl himself (p.313) he tells us that no other oceanic island in the Pacific hemisphere had any vestiges of prehistoric civilization such as architecture, engineering, art or astronomy; and he repeats his usual assertion that "The most consistent and deeply rooted claim of the Easter Islanders was that their ancestors had come from a large desert country to the east." In fact that tale was recorded only by Thomson (who may well have misunderstood) and was *never encountered* by Routledge whose much longer stay occurred only a generation later. The vast majority of oral traditions pointed firmly westward.

RNJ readers may take some comfort from the thought (p.175) that Heyerdahl feels his work on Easter Island has reached a kind of conclusion. "He has shown, to his own satisfaction at least, that the earliest settlers were the long-ears, who came from the east." Ralling does have the grace to add that "it must be said that there is still a large body of professional opinion that takes a different view." Nice of him to notice.

All this stuff, alas, was regurgitated with even less respect for the truth in the actual programmes. Like the book, the series had a marked lack of reviews in the British press: one piece in *The Independent* of May 3rd referred to the "florid travelogue narration," the crass commentary, in a "series as anodyne as a public relations video." Others referred disparagingly to "recycled publicity stunts," and even suggested, unkindly, that the title contained two superfluous syllables. Ralling himself, although at pains to point out that Thor would "want to be regarded first as a serious scientist", also refers to him as a wandering spirit, a scientific gambler, an inspired amateur, a scientific adventurer, and a showman.

On the plus side, it must be said that it was nice to see all the old classic footage of the Norwegian expedition again, including its glimpses of Englert and a pre-*tsunami* Tongariki, and it was interesting to see footage of the recent Pavel experiment in moving an upright *moai*; the introductory music of each episode is suitably stirring, with strings and brass evoking the ocean swells and the roving Viking; and each week, Thor looks fetching in his natty safari outfits, though for a man of his means it is odd that he only

seems to possess two, one blue and the other beige. Unfortunately, there is far more to be said about the minus side of the series.

Where Easter Island is concerned, the rot sets in as soon as the topic arises in program 3: Ralling's voice-over tells us that Roggeveen came ashore on Easter Sunday 1772 [sic]; Heyerdahl informs us of a "very strong oral tradition that Hotu Matua came from the east," and as Ralling, describing the birdman cult, says that "Once a year the strongest men used to creep out from the caves for a ritual race," we see footage of natives emerging from the Orongo houses...

Things get far worse in program 4, which opens with a birdman dance in La Paz to lead us neatly back to the Orongo carvings. It will be recalled that in the book of the series, as in *The Mystery Solved* and earlier works, the amount of excavation done by Routledge was minimized; on TV, this is taken even farther: referring to Kathleen [sic] Routledge, Ralling announces that "she carefully mapped and listed over 400 statues *but made no attempt at excavation*." We then see him in conversation with Thor (i.e. the first excavator) at Rano Raraku:

Ralling: "Isn't it very strange that excavation took place so late?"

T.H.: "Well, you know that before I launched the theory that the first migration came from South America, it was a common belief that they came from Asia, and then this would be the last island populated and no time for soil to accumulate, so there would be nothing to dig for. I had the opposite view, that they came from South America, this was the first island populated and thus there would be a lot of sedimentation." (This point is subtly emphasised by showing footage of the excavation of a deeply buried statue on the volcano's slope).

A little later, Ralling's voice-over, referring to Rano Raraku, declares that "throughout the South Seas, no work has ever been found resembling this, yet many scientists still believe it was done by Polynesians, a view that Thor Heyerdahl has never shared." Cut to Thor himself, who states "I lived one year among the Polynesians in the Marquesas Islands and I know that this is not the kind of work they would do. They are happy if they can collect the bananas and the breadfruit they need for the day—they would not have anybody telling them to work like slaves in masses, so I felt very strongly here we have some branch of the great prehistoric civilizations of the world, and I felt that way ever since." So much for the Polynesians. One wonders if he would consider present-day Egyptian peasants to be capable of building the pyramids, or Greek farmers of carving the Parthenon. There are distinct echoes of a Von Daniken philosophy here.

Finally, in the last program, we return to the island, where we are given a glimpse of the recent excavation at Anakena, which seems to have uncovered a lower portion of stone wall.

Ralling: "So has this particular excavation modified your views at all?"

T.H.: "No, it has confirmed my view [surprise, surprise]. My view was that the first people who came here came from South America with already developed skill in stonework of this type. They would not be able to come from Polynesia as wind-driven

fishermen with an art as perfect as that, and this is what I maintained all the time."

Ralling: "And has anything else been found in this particular hole?"

T.H.: "Well, in this particular hole there has been a lot of carbon so we will be able to date this early structure, but we can't do that unless the carbon has passed through the laboratory."

Ralling: "And human remains?"

T.H.: "We also find human bones, particularly high up we found a lot of burials." (Footage was shown here of a rocker jaw, though without any comment—see George Gill in the last *RNJ*!)

Ralling (voice): "The most celebrated example of highly skilled masonry work is at Vinapu... Nothing of this sophistication has ever been found on Polynesian islands to the west. For Thor, the culture links spread eastwards to the pre-Inca period in South America and eastwards again to the ancient civilization of the Old World. I asked him whether there were any further doubts in his own mind, or were the principle mysteries of Easter Island finally solved?"

T.H. (at Vinapu): "I think we can say with certainty today that the first people who came here came from South America and they did this astonishing work," (jerks thumb at wall behind him) "and later came the Polynesians and when Roggeveen and the first Europeans came they met a mixed population..."

Ralling, in another voice-over, tells us that "For the time being his work here is over, and like any other archaeologist [sic!] he expects to see his findings modified by later research. But his fundamental views on Pacific migration, with the story of Easter Island at their very heart, remains as unshakable as ever."

I find it interesting and significant that the word "unshakable" was used rather than "unshaken." The entire series is so one-sided, with Ralling only raising the feeblest of objections to Heyerdahl's claims, and even then primarily as "feeders" to more such claims, that it quickly became laughable. *RNJ* readers may derive some comfort from the knowledge, imparted to me by friends at the BBC, that the series (despite the booksales achieved) was considered a flop, pulling in only about 4 million viewers for even the earliest episodes before the novelty wore off. In fact, its slot on a Wednesday evening, sandwiched between a chat-show and *Dallas*, is considered a black hole by the BBC since it stands directly opposite *Coronation Street* (Britain's most popular soap) on another channel. All producers try to avoid this unpopular slot, so a cheap bought-in series like this seemed like an eminently suitable filler for ten weeks. The lack of importance attached to it can be seen in the fact that two different episodes were postponed to make way for football.

Nevertheless, 4 million innocent Brits have been exposed to this stuff, quite apart from those who have bought the book. *RNJ* readers, this package may even now be heading towards your local TV station. You have been warned...



What's New in Hangaroa

Recent arrivals on the island include two windmills and a watering tank; they will be installed at Vaihu and Hanga Oteo so that the Rapanui can commence with the development of agriculture and livestock. This project is financed by a grant to the Consejo de Ancianos from OCAC, an organization connected with Santiago Archbishopry.

It has been a rainy winter on the island; recent visitors write that it rained steadily for two weeks. As for the paving of Te Pito te Henua, the paving still extends only 50 feet downhill and has the unfortunate effect of funneling the rain—not into the immense new rain gutters—but onto the unpaved road and, as a result, a winding gulch in the road has been created, deep enough so that a car could easily hit bottom should a wheel slip in.

The public library at the school is still not open but now it is fenced and the broken windows repaired.

The Second Congress for the Development of Easter Island was held on the island in June. The Congress was co-sponsored by SASIPA and the Consejo de Ancianos. Attending were a senator from the continent, three congressmen from the V Region, the Vice Minister of CORFO, the Vice President of LAN in charge of tourism, and other dignitaries from the continent. Topics that were discussed include agriculture and fishing, tourism, education, health, communications, and supplies.

Rapanui Sculptors on Tahiti From Tahiti comes news of Easter Island artists who are creating sculptures to decorate the new Papeete Municipal Hall. The most impressive, in terms of size, will be a 4.5 meter tall stone *tiki* sculpture created by six carvers from Easter Island. Work is underway on the statue, which combines traditional Easter Island features with other Polynesian characteristics: the top of the statue will feature a symbolic father and daughter creation, representing the union of Easter Island and Polynesia. The intention of the sculptors is to underscore the ties that exist between Easter Island and Tahiti; during the last 10 years, nearly 100 children have been born in Tahiti of Tahitian and Easter Island parents.

Three women sculptors, all from Easter Island, are also preparing a 2.3 meter tall stone sculpture for the Papeete Municipal Hall; this work is titled 'Te Ora' (Tahitian for "life").

Isla de Pascua and an International Spectacular

A great musical spectacular under the auspices of the Corporation de Desarrollo Cultural de Isla de Pascua hopes to bring to Chile several important international figures including The Rolling Stones, Olivia Newton-John, Bob Dylan, Robert Palmer, Jean Michel Jarre, and Julio Iglesias. This spectacular event, of the type "USA for Africa", will take place in Chile at the beginning of next year. The object is to raise funds for the conservation of the archaeological patrimony of Easter Island and for deprived children in Chile. The concert will be held either on Easter Island or in the National Stadium in Santiago.

Polynesian Canoe Championships

The International Polynesian Canoe Federation's fourth world sprint championships in Auckland brought more than 1000 paddlers from around the Pacific. Teams came from outrigger strongholds of Tahiti and Hawaii, American and Western Samoa, Australia, California, Canada, the Cook Islands, New Caledonia, New Zealand, and Fiji. Tahiti, with its pool of more than 6000 paddlers in what is virtually the country's national sport, swept the medals, winning 19 of the 22 gold medals. The 250 strong Tahitian contingent won all of the single person outrigger titles plus the men's and women's glamour sprints in the 12 person double hulls.

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